

Committee on Ways and Means

S. 3525, As Amended, to Include H.R. 5640, the *Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006*

Bill Summary

Section 1 – Short Title

Section 2 – Findings

Section 3 – Reauthorization of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Program

- The House-passed legislation maintains current targeting for family support services, family preservation services, time-limited reunification services, and post-adoption services.
- The House-passed legislation reauthorizes through fiscal year (FY) 2011 at \$345 million per year mandatory -- the higher level resulting from the \$40 million per year increase included in the *Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA)* -- and \$200 million per year discretionary.
- The House-passed legislation reinforces 10 percent limit on annual spending for administrative expenses.
- The House-passed legislation increases tribal set-aside to 3 percent for both mandatory (currently 1 percent) and discretionary (currently 2 percent) streams and permits tribal consortia to apply for grants.

Section 4 – Targeting of \$40 Million Increase in PSSF Funds Included in DRA

- DRA increased mandatory PSSF funds by \$40 million per year (\$305 to \$345 million).
- The House-passed legislation targets this \$40 million for State efforts to ensure children in foster care are visited on a monthly basis. This responds to recent Department of Health and Human Services Inspector General concerns and other data indicating monthly visits were not occurring, despite State policy. Beginning with FY 2008, only States that show improvement in completing monthly visits for foster children would continue to receive these funds.

Section 5 - Improvements to Child Welfare Services (CWS) Program

- Under current law, the CWS program is permanently authorized at \$325 million per year and was last updated significantly in 1980. Recent appropriations have averaged \$290 million per year. CWS generally overlaps PSSF program purposes.
- The House-passed legislation reorganizes and updates CWS program, making technical changes including a new State plan requirement for doctors to be actively involved in assessing the health and well-being of foster children.
- The House-passed legislation ensures future Congressional review by authorizing CWS through FY 2011.
- The House-passed legislation creates new 10 percent limit on CWS spending for administrative expenses.

- The House-passed legislation permits States that can document they currently spend CWS dollars for foster care, adoption assistance, or child care to continue to do so, subject to the current law cap on such spending.

Section 6 – Reauthorization of the Court Improvement Program

- The House-passed legislation reauthorizes through FY 2011 the current \$10 million set-aside for general Court Improvement Program activities provided from PSSF funds. (Note: DRA also provided an additional \$20 million for each of fiscal years (FYs) 2006 through 2010 to improve data collection and increase training of court personnel.)

Section 7 – Reauthorization of the Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program

- The House-passed legislation reauthorizes through FY 2011 at such sums as may be necessary. (Note: House Appropriations Committee FY 2007 Labor HHS bill would provide \$40 million for this program.)

Section 8 – Availability of \$40 Million Increase in PSSF Funds Provided for FY 2006

- The House-passed legislation appropriates the \$40 million increase in mandatory PSSF funds provided for FY 2006 under the DRA.

Section 9 – Reports to Congress Regarding How PSSF and CWS Program Funds Are Spent

Section 10 – Effective Dates